

Story #474 (Tape #11, 1970)

Narrator: Ayshe Bostanci, 11,
daughter of official
at Forestry Compound,
Bolu

Location: Bolu, Province of Bolu

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The Kind and Unkind Stepsisters

Ayshe's mother was dead, but she had a father. On the other hand, Fatma's father was dead, but her mother was alive. As Ayshe's father found life difficult without a wife, he decided to take another wife, and so he married Fatma's mother.

Fatma's mother liked her own daughter much more than she did Ayshe. *Stepmother*
One day her mother said to Fatma, "Take Ayshe out into the woods and leave her in the mountains."

Fatma then said to her stepsister, "Come, Ayshe, let us go and pick flowers." After they had been picking flowers for some time, Fatma said, "I am thirsty. I want some water to drink." And so she pretended to be seeking some water, but actually she ran away from Ayshe.

When Fatma did not return, Ayshe started walking along a road. After a while she met a [?]baker to whom she said, "Uncle baker, please give me a loaf of bread."

The baker answered, "I have some work to be done. If you do it, I shall give you some bread. You just come into my shop and clean my work bench."

Ayshe cleaned his work bench and received a loaf of bread. Starting along her way again, she soon met on the road an old man. The old man

"I have many lice in my hair. If you will clean them out, I pray for you."

"All right," she said. She cleaned the lice from the old man's hair, and then the old man prayed for her.

Continuing on her way, Ayshe met a dog. The dog said to her, "If you will pick the fleas from my body, I shall give you a fine present."

After she had removed the fleas from the dog, he spoke to her again.

"Here is a key. Take this key, go down this road until you come to a hut, and with the key unlock the door of the hut. Inside you will find a yellow chest. Take the yellow chest and with it return to your home, which is just down the street from there."

"Very well," she said, and she went to the hut, opened the door with the key, and found the yellow chest. Taking the yellow chest, she went to her own home. As she approached her home, a cock started crowing, "Uh-uh-uh-uh-uh-h-h!"¹ Ayshe girl is coming with golden honey!"

Fatma's mother was very angry at hearing this. The news given by the cock did not please her. Ayshe's father was at home, and he asked her, "Where have you been, daughter?"

"Fatma left me in the woods and ran away. As I was walking home, I met a baker who gave me a loaf of bread after I had done some work for him. Then I met an old man along the road who asked me to clean the

¹This is supposed to be onomatopoeia for the cock's crowing.

*Animal
speaking
human
language*

Rooster

lice from his hair. I did this, and he prayed for me. Then I met a dog along the road, and he said to me, 'If you will pick the fleas from my body, I shall give you a fine present.' After I had picked the fleas from his body, he said this to me: 'Take this key and go down this road until you reach a hut. Then unlock the door of the hut with this key. Inside, you will find a yellow chest. Take it and then continue on, and you will come to your own home.' I took the key, went to the hut, unlocked the door, and took the yellow chest. When I arrived here, the cock started crowing."

When they opened the chest, they found that it was filled with all sorts of jewels. The stepmother was very jealous of Ayshe. She wanted her own daughter to have a present like this. She said, "Ayshe, take Fatma to the forest and leave her there this time so that she can have things of the kind you have."

"All right," said Ayshe.

Ayshe left Fatma in the forest. As she was walking along in the evening, she met a baker. "Uncle, will you give me a loaf of bread?" she asked.

"I have a condition," he said, "If you do it, I shall give you a loaf of bread. You must first clean my work bench."

"Oh, am I supposed to clean your dirty bench? No, I cannot do it!" And so she left without receiving a loaf of bread. Farther along, she met an old man.

"If you will clean the lice from my hair," he said, "I shall pray for you."

"Alas! Am I supposed to clean the dirty lice from your hair? No, I cannot." And so she left without having him pray for her. Finally she met the dog.

He said to her, "I have fleas on my body. If you will pick them off, I shall give you a fine present."

"Oh, I cannot pick the dirty fleas from your body. No!"

"Well, then," said the dog, "take this key, go along this road, and you will come to a hut. Unlock the door of the hut with this key and inside you will find a black chest. Take this black chest and continue on until you reach your home."

Fatma took the key, went along the road until she reached the hut where she unlocked the door with the key and found the black chest. As she approached her home with the chest, the cock started crowing, "Uh-uh-uh-uh-uh-h-h-h! Fatma girl is coming with snakes and lizards!"

Fatma's mother asked crossly, "Why does it crow and say that about Fatma?" When Fatma arrived home, her mother said, "Now, my daughter, open your chest and see what is in it."

When they opened the chest and looked inside, they saw that it was filled with all kinds of animals, including snakes. Fatma and her mother were both bitten by snakes and died. Ayshe and her father then continued to live comfortably.